WORDS OF RECONCILIATION.

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VALEDICTORY.

The time has come in the history of this magazine when some farewell words must be spoken. In the last number allusion was made to the principal reasons for its discontinuance, and a review was given of its testimony to some aspects of truth long overlooked by the Church, and of the work it has accomplished.

I shall lay down the work with regret, and yet not without emotions of thankfulness.

If the magazine had sprung at once into popularity, I might well have doubted whether its work was of God. The instances are few where any witness for His truth has met with immediate favor at the hands of those whom he sought to benefit. And yet I have reason to be thankful for the evidences given that devout and thoughtful minds in all sections of the Church recognize the force of the testimony this magazine has given to the prime gospel truth, that the redemption of the race is through its resurrection from the dead, and that the old view of the issue of resurrection as eternal corporeal damnation to a large proportion of the race is fundamentally false and without warrant of Scripture.

I have reason to believe, too, that this magazine has been able to reconcile this universalistic view of redemption with the Bible truth about retribution and the decis-

iveness of this present life in a way not before attempted, and by which the present diverse systems of religious thought on this grave subject may finally be harmonized. Thus, one of the chosen objects of the magazine has been steadfastly pursued, which was to find a common ground upon which the severed branches of the one Church might be drawn together as they come to better understand what is the true goal of humanity under the administration of our one Lord, and what part He assigns to her in the great work of its redemption.

I have much reason to be thankful, too, that not only a number of earnest and thoughtful Christians have been led to adopt these views, but that some of them have been willing to make sacrifices in order to spread them through these pages. I am more grateful than I can well express to these choice friends who have from year to year helped to bear this burden by their benefactions, and by their words of cheer and sympathy. One of my chief causes of regret in suspending the work is that this seems to make a break in the fellowship we have had together in its prosecution; but I remember that the ties formed in any true work done for the Master are eternal, and in the end the worker and the giver shall share in the reward, as also shall the sower and the reaper rejoice together.

I may be pardoned for giving, in this closing number of the magazine, extracts from the letters of some of its friends, which show their appreciation of its work and their regret at its discontinuance.

No small part of the editor's work has been the correspondence, which a publisher of new views always elicits. It comes from both quarters—those who approve and

those who disapprove—and also from those seeking further light. In the course of a work like this, an editor, especially if he has been a pastor, begins to cherish toward his circle of readers and correspondents something of the feeling a pastor has for his flock. In this case the members of the flock are absent and unseen, and one greatly misses the support which they might give by personal contact and sympathy. And yet I cannot part from the friends made during this work—friends who have honored me with their confidence and who have received the messages sent them on these pages and by private letters as from one to whom they looked for instruction and light—without something of the tender regret that springs up in the true pastor's heart as he bids adieu to those among whom he has gone in and out, declaring to them the counsel of God. To all of them I send these farewell words, with the assurance that I shall ever bear them on my heart, and with the prayer that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may increase in them abundantly the knowledge of His will, and bring forth in them richly such fruits of good living as He expects from those to whom He imparts the secret of His covenant and the knowledge of His wondrous ways.

A CLOSING WORD TO PRESBYTERIANS.

I cannot close this magazine without urging once more upon the attention of my former brethren two things most important to the welfare of their Church.

The first of these is, that they should at once renounce

that low idea of the Church which pervades their denominational system, and which makes of it an association for preserving and handing down a fixed deposit of truth received from the fathers, and acknowledge that, as a living body, the Church must grow in the knowledge of the truth until she attains to perfection and unity. The Presbyterian Church makes no proper provision for such growth. She assumes that the body of divine truth is fixed in her formulas, and frowns out of her fold any of her ministers, howsoever sincere and devoted, who seek to break through the trammels of her system at any point, and to lead her out into larger light and liberty. The evils of this cramping system are manifold. Men are forced by it to stand as the exponents of dogmas which they do not fully accept nor honestly preach. Assent and subscription to the Creed are often made with mental reservation or tergiversations which are wholly out of place in matters of religious faith and testimony, where everything should be transparent as the light. In this region intellectual vacillation or subterfuge becomes the parent of spiritual weakness and blight. No Church is properly organized, or deserves the name of Church, which does not honor the Holy Ghost as perpetual guide and instructor; which does not confess that she yet knows only in part and prophesies in part, and which is not on the alert to receive and welcome such new views of truth as He may from time to time impart to her through the lips or the pens of her anointed sons. It comes to this in such a church, that character counts for far less than creed; that unworthy men who will speak her shibboleths have open passport to her honors and favors, while consecrated men, whose

conscience compels them to dissent, and who love the Church too truly to keep silent where they think she has been betrayed into ignorance or error, are either driven out or are politely invited to step down and out.

And a false public sentiment in the Church, backed by the secular papers, approves all this as excellent. No higher standard of Church association or obligation is admitted than that which makes an ordained teacher in the Church the mere mouthpiece to utter that which has already been agreed upon. "If a minister cannot honestly preach all the dogmas of his Church, why surely as an honest man he should withdraw." Only a few days ago in the Presbytery of Philadelphia this was extolled as the only manly course.

Now, we have to say to these brethren that if this degrading view of the Church, and of the obligation of her ministers to seek her purity and peace, continue to prevail, then Ichabod will soon be written upon the portals of the Presbyterian Church. Already, in nearly every large city, she is losing hold upon that class of educated and upright hearers of which her audiences were once largely made up. The proportion of this class is steadily diminishing. Already, her hearers miss the sincerity and earnestness in her pulpits which they have a right to expect from men thoroughly in touch with the doctrines to which they stand committed. We believe that this decay is due to the fact that the power of the Holy Spirit is restrained under a system which quenches His free utterance. One of the most earnest and eloquent preachers of that Church once deploringly confessed to us that the enthusiasm with which he began his ministry had

been greatly chilled by these restraints, which often held him back from speaking out his highest and best thoughts of God to men.

We, therefore, again implore our Presbyterian brethren to give up the idea that they can construct a living and lasting Church upon this narrow basis. This stifling process tends to intellectual and spiritual atrophy. It tempts men into hypocrisy and mean subservience to temporal interests, or drives out those whose consciences will not suffer them to bend to the yoke; and whom, of all others, the Church can least afford to lose. Within a month the papers record three instances of such withdrawals. One of these, at least, we know to be an instance of a most gifted and earnest man, in a post of the highest honor and usefulness in this city, whose withdrawal brought a shock of surprise to all his brethren and a burden of calamity and grief to his large congregation. These things must go on, unless the Church make larger room for earnest and sincere souls who in this day of advancing light cannot shut their eyes and ears to the widening disclosures of truth which God is unfolding from His Word and works, and who have no other desire than to use the light that comes to them, for His glory and the welfare of the Church they love and would most gladly serve.

The other matter about which I have a final word to say to Presbyterians concerns the Revision of their Confession. As having been a pioneer among those who pointed out its defects, and as having risked and lost my standing among them in the attempt, they must permit me to say again, that the whole trouble with the Confession arises out of a grievous mistake in its eschatology. It does not

lie in the fact that it refers everything in this system of the world and of man back to God, but in its wrong apprehension of the outcome of the system. And into this false estimate it is betrayed by a misconception of the meaning of the primary truth of the Gospel. The Church for many centuries has rested under the shadow of a false view of the purpose of God in providing for all mankind recovery to another life beyond death. The Reformed Churches, in making up their systems, fell into this traditional mistake. The Scriptures teach that, while the wages of sin is death—a death which may carry down even the soul into destruction in hell (Matt. x, 28), God has provided redemption from death through resurrection, which can reach every man, however, only in his own order and with such accessories of judgment as shall infallibly render to every man according to his work. The Confession of Faith assumes that there is no benevolent intent whatever, no "hope toward God" in the provision to raise the unjust, but that the effect of Christ's victory over death in their case is simply to unspeakably augment their doom, adding to the torment of the soul the anguish of an eternal corporeal damnation.

Now we have to say that this degrading view of resurrection, in the case of this immense portion of mankind, is utterly unscriptural. It violates the whole spirit and letter of Old Testament prophecy and confuses it into a hopeless enigma; it misconceives the whole work of redemption, narrows the meaning of election, and mutilates and obscures every first principle of the gospel of the grace of God. We cannot here again go over the ground so often gone over in these pages to show how all Bible truth

about retribution fits in harmoniously with this truth of race-redemption through resurrection. But we once again entreat our brethren to examine this principle of redemptive resurrection in the light of Scripture and of reason, and even of science, and to ask themselves whether they cannot find the key here to all the dark problems which vex them in their effort to revise their Standards. They are not bound to follow us in our attempts to adjust this principle to other truths of Scripture or of science. But it is perilous in them to reject the principle itself.

For this is not a mere question of policy or of theological riddles. We affirm that, so long as the Presbyterian Church permits this slur upon God's redemptive purpose in resurrection to remain in their Confession—stripping it of all beneficent effect except in the case of the elect—so long she must stand as a false witness to the grace and power of God in the gospel of His Son. For this matter enters into the very heart of the gospel. Its glad tidings begin with the announcement of Christ's resurrection as a note of great joy to all people, and in fulfillment of the ancient promise—oft repeated—that in Him all the families of the earth shall be blessed. It is, therefore, no light matter to strip this primary fact of the gospel, upon which the world's hope rests, of its true efficacy and meaning.

For testifying to the true value and the wide scope of this first truth of the gospel, and in the endeavor to bring my Church to see it, I was compelled to withdraw from it. This increases my right to speak this word of warning, and to say to these brethren, that if they continue to pervert and deny this gospel of the resurrection, their compromising expedients to amend their Standards will be

futile, and the troubles in their camp will increase. God will give them no rest, and no prosperity worthy of the name, until they render to Him in this vital matter the glory due unto His name.

OBLIGATIONS INCREASED.

It is often taken for granted that, with more liberal and hopeful views of the future of mankind, there must necessarily come a loss of zeal in Christian work, and a diminished sense of responsibility for the salvation of men. It has, however, been one of the features of this magazine that, in broadening the horizon of the Christian's hope for mankind, it has shown how this hope can be realized only through the devotion and self-sacrifice of elect souls who are willing to take part with Christ in His work of redeeming mankind. The ordinary view of the Christian's responsibility in this work limits it to this narrow sphere of earth and time. The few souls with whom he is brought in contact in the brief span of his life are all with whose salvation he is supposed to be charged. But when one comes to see the true doctrine of the unity of mankind, as embracing the living and the dead in one organism, and to know that each living soul represents on the arena of life a series of lives that went before it, of which it is the product and the continuation, a wider and deeper sense of individual responsibility is attained. And especially as the Christian comes to view himself as a member of that Christ-body which is the firstfruits of those redeemed from among men, and who are therefore charged with the potency and

the responsibility of redeeming their brethren, he gains a new sense of what Scripture means when it describes him as called by God "into fellowship with His Son, Christ Jesus our Lord" (I Cor. i, 9), with him to suffer, to count all things but loss, and with Him to be baptized in behalf of the dead (I Cor. xv, 29). Our view shows how much larger and more intimate is the relation of the individual Christian to the world's redemption, and how widespread the effect of his devotion and self-denial, and how indispensable it is to the result.

We have taught no doctrine of a lazy, selfish passage into heaven on the ground of what has been done for us, but the Scripture doctrine that every man must reap the fruit of his own doings, and that Christ is given to us not to avert from us the consequences of our wrong-doing, but to dwell in us as a living and overcoming power of right-doing, and to bring forth in us the same fruit of loving self-sacrifice for the sins and sorrows of men that was so pre-eminent in Him.

And no other doctrine so stimulates the Christian to seek the unity and purity of the Church, for no other so exalts the place of the Church in God's redeeming plan, and so demonstrates how necessary it is for the salvation of the world that the channels of her life be kept free and undefiled.

And as for philanthropic labors, no other doctrine presents so strong motives; for no other insists so strongly and with such added weight of scientific proof, that in the body of humanity we are all members one of another, and that the wrong and pain of one is the concern of all. Our doctrine shows that the salvation of the individual can

only be wrought out by labors and sacrifices for the general good, and that his ultimate perfection and blessedness are bound up in that of the race, even as in the Revelation the heaven of the saint is identified with the city of God, which, coming down from heaven, is set up on earth, and in the light of whose glory all its nations walk.

We are firmly convinced that the low and selfish type of piety so prevalent among professing Christians, the worldliness by which the Church is clogged and the sense of her high calling obscured, the prevalent indifference to her divided and weakened state would be impossible were Christians truly enlightened in the meaning of that gospel of which the resurrection of Christ is the central fact. That prime fact of the Christian faith has been so dislocated, and distorted into an infinite calamity to an immense portion of the race that, in the language of Isaiah, a "covering is cast over all people," hiding from them the glory and the grace of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. The false doctrine of the resurrection of the unjust for purposes of everlasting punishment is responsible for this dark veil over the face of God, for the Christian lives stunted by this blindness, and for this long groping of the world in sin and in ignorance of God, and of His great salvation.

One of the Chief Causes of the traditional monstrosity that has grown up in the Church in her doctrine of future punishment has been a persistent misapplication of certain Scripture warnings against being cast into hell which our Lord addressed to His *disciples* when they

were withdrawn from the multitude. These passages, as, for example, Mark ix, 43–50; Matthew v, 29; xviii, 8, 9, were not spoken to promiscuous hearers, but were parts of His esoteric teaching concerning the way of holiness and life eternal to a chosen few who were prepared to receive it. It is not denied that other men were exposed to the same danger of having the "whole body" cast into unquenchable fire. But the perversion alluded to has resulted in the manufacture, out of these directions to Christians to "mortify their members which are upon the earth," of a monstrous threat to cast the resurrected bodies of the wicked into hell-fire for endless torment. Nothing at all is said of what may come to men after their resurrection; they are only warned that their existing embodiment (which includes the soul as distinct from spirit) is in danger of irresistible destruction, unless its members be yielded unto God.

The same perversion is carried over to the teaching of the apostles, as, for instance, Heb. xii, 26 is read as if it taught that "God out of Christ is a consuming fire," whereas the very thing taught is that "*Our* God," the Christian's God, is a consuming fire.

The Law of Forgiveness.—The law of the Divine forgiveness is clearly set forth in the Lord's Prayer, and it is very different from the idea of pardon prevalent in the minds of most Christians. The common idea is that God pardons our sins as a Judge, on the ground of our Lord's meritorious endurance of their penalty in our stead. Jesus taught no such doctrine, but that God's forgiveness reaches men as they come into that state of mind which is the

abandonment of sin. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." The grace of Christ in accomplishing man's salvation consists in the fact that through His death and resurrection He effects in us that death to sin and that power of holiness which enables us from the heart to forgive our enemies. In this way God *puts away* our sins, which is the true meaning of the Greek word ἀφίημι, to forgive; and so we escape their penalty by getting rid of the sins that require it.

ARE ALL SAVED?—I meet along the street a riff-raff crowd of men; some of them rough, swaggering, boisterous, perhaps drunken and vicious. You ask me, "Will all these be saved?" My reply is yes or no, according to the point of view from which you look at them. If by "these" you mean the rough, exterior, disagreeable personages I see before me, I should say no. These human-animal forms are but the temporary investiture of a real man within, who is struggling through this mass of carnality to reveal himself. This real man, God's child, can never be lost: he will finally be delivered from this bondage and discipline in these low forms of creaturehood, and find perfect expression in that perfect manhood which is the image of God. But these personalities before us are but rude draughts of this final personality, experimental phases in his progress toward this goal. Whatever of goodness and virtue may be developed in them cannot be lost. This is what we mean when we say that continuity of personal existence goes with character. But all that

is vile and unfit must be burnt up in God's consuming fire.

What therefore we *see* of such men will not be saved. The very self that is present to their consciousness will be lost. But the inmost man, which bears the stamp of God's image, which we do not see, and of which the outward man is but dimly conscious, will be saved out of the destruction of the flesh and out of the consuming fire.

UNITARIAN CONFERENCE.—A conference of the Unitarian Church of New England and the Middle States has just been held in this city. We listened to several addresses made by some of the ablest men of that denomination. They were largely devoted to practical themes suggested by the humanitarian aims and efforts for which that body is distinguished. There was a brightness and breeziness in their discussions, and we may say, too, a candor and an earnestness, which one often misses in similar assemblies of other Christian bodies. Notwithstanding its dangers, there is more of healthy vigor and of safety in an atmosphere of freedom than in the stifled air in which some religious bodies compel the fettered thought of their exponents to move. While we are far from indorsing the theology of the Unitarians, we certainly believe that the encouragement they give to every man to be loyal to his highest convictions will in the end contribute more to the establishment of truth among them than would be possible under a policy of trimming and suppression. Orthodoxy has yet to learn how much and how largely the Spirit of God in the Church may be trusted to eliminate

error and make luminous the truth where He is given full scope.

But while we accord these men due honor for sincerity and uprightness, we must testify to some great defects in their thinking and working system.

We were told at the Conference that their body stands especially for these twin truths, the humanity of God and the divinity of man. That humanity is divine, and that God manifests Himself in and though it is a primary truth of Scripture. But our Unitarian friends have been so zealous to claim this unity in life with God for all men as to depreciate and deny the supreme oneness with God of Jesus Christ our Lord. Where men can engage in public prayer, or dismiss their assemblies with a benediction from which this Name above every name is absent, something is radically wrong in their conception of the relation of this Divine Man, both to God and to humanity. They cannot give its true value to the Scripture declaration that He is the Son of God, nor take in the significance of His title, Son of Man. Hence, their humanitarian efforts, commendable as they are in some of their aspects, take no proper account of the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the divinely anointed Head of the race and Source of life and power for its regeneration.

The defect in their theology concerning the person and work of Jesus, as the Redeemer of the world, shows itself especially in the way in which they ignore the uplifting power of His resurrection. Their trust is rather in an appeal to the God-given instincts in every man, forgetting that these need to be aroused and quickened into life and activity by the energetic operation of the Spirit of Christ,

and that He now holds this office and relation to the race, as the depositary of a divine-human life by which men are created anew in Him unto good works. Every man, too, in whom the Christ-nature is formed becomes in his measure a transmitter of this life. The saints who have passed over into the life beyond are made channels of it. These victorious dead become our helpers; and so, also, each generation of living men, by an organic law of heredity, bear the burden of the failures and sins of their dead kindred in such a way that in achieving deliverance from the burden they help to free also those who went before them. Elect souls among the living are thus baptized for the dead.

Now views like these require a wider and more intelligent grasp of the relation of Christ to His Father and to the world than Unitarians have yet attained to, and a deeper and more sympathetic tenderness and charity toward sin-burdened humanity than they or any other class of Christians have yet cherished. They are indeed to be commended for their interest in all that concerns the welfare of society and for their aid to the unfortunate and oppressed. But the burden of the world's evil can never be lifted by any power less than that which wrought in Christ and raised Him from the dead. This alone can work out in the whole body of humanity its deliverance. And the channel of this power must be a consecrated Church in which Christ lives to put forth His power. The reason the Church has not effected greater results in the past is that she has been such an imperfect and broken channel of this divine energy. Where there is lack of knowledge and of unity and harmony there must be loss of strength.

It is here where the Unitarian system fails to grasp the situation, and proves its incompetency. It may stimulate some individuals to action and to self-sacrifice, but it cannot represent or become a body of Christ, pervaded by His life and energy for the emancipation of the race, living and dead, from its bondage to corruption. Jesus predicted that His followers should do mightier works of healing and salvation in His name than He had done, because He was going to the Father. For a little season these words were verified. The sick were healed, the sorrowful were made glad, those who had possessions ministered out of their abundance to those who had them not, demons were cast out from human bodies which they had deformed and debased, and from minds that they had bewildered and deranged. Such mighty works must yet again be wrought on the earth before its wants shall be relieved and its woes banished. For disorder and sin go hand in hand, and while education can do much, a power is yet needed which can touch the very sources and springs of life, and subject the unseen forces of nature to the great work of harmonizing man with God. And therefore the very first and greatest present need of humanity is a united and consecrated Church, with such knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent as shall let her into the very secrets of His covenant, and admit her into the very recesses of His power, so that from out the holy place she may come with hands laden with blessing for all people and with power to raise up a crippled and burdened and devil-oppressed humanity, which has been so long lying at her gates, until it shall walk and leap anew in the strength of God.

THERE IS A PROFOUND and subtle connection subsisting betwen the various members of the human family. The individual is inwoven in the web of humanity; he inherits the nature of his ancestry; and that ancestry, if we calculate backwards by arithmetical progression, will be found to include most of the members of the race that figured on the stage of human life at some far-distant epoch in the past. In other words, each individual sums up, in his own person, not merely the nature of one separate line or family, but, like a river which gathers up the tributary streams that drain a whole region of country, and which contains traces of all the soils within that area, he concentrates in his own person the nature of the whole human family. . . . The nature of the ancestral source bears the potentiality of the nature of the offspring. The solidarity of the race and the hereditary transmission of a common nature are alike familiar to modern science as to Calvinism.—*John Wilson.*

EXTRACTS FROM GEORGE MACDONALD.—In a recent book by this author called *The Hope of the Gospel*, we have evidence of how devout thinkers of prophetic and poetic instinct are feeling in our day after the truth involved in the unity of created life, and its continuity as transmitted from one generation to another along the scale of progress toward its goal. On page 216 we read:

All animal forms tend to higher: why should not the individual, as well as the race, pass through stages of ascent? If I have myself gone through each of the typical forms of lower life on my way to the human—a supposition by ante-natal history rendered probable—and therefore may have passed through any number of individual forms of life, I do not see why each of the lower animals

should not as well pass upward through a succession of bettering embodiments. I grant that the theory requires another to complement it, namely, that these men and women who do not approximately fulfill the conditions of their elevated rank, who will not endeavor after the great human-divine idea, striving to ascend, are sent away back down to that stage of development, say of fish or insect or reptile, beyond which their moral nature has refused to advance. Who has not seen or known of men who *appeared* not to have passed, or indeed in some things to have approached the development of the more human of the lower animals! Let those take care who look contemptuously upon the animals, lest, in misusing them, they misuse some ancestor of their own sent back as the one mercy for him, to reassume far past forms and conditions—far past in physical, that is, but not in moral development—and so have another opportunity of passing the self-constituted barrier. The suggestion may appear very ridiculous, and no doubt lends itself to humorous comment; but what if it should be true! What if the amused reader should himself be getting ready to follow the remanded ancestor? Upon it, however, I do not care to spend thought or time, least of all argument; what I care to press is the question, If we believe in the progress of creation as hitherto manifested, also in the marvelous changes of form that take place in every individual of certain classes, why should there be any difficulty in hoping that old lives may reappear in new forms? The typal soul reappears in higher formal type; why may not also the individual soul reappear in higher form?

This gifted author has, we think, fallen into a serious mistake in taking up the Brahminical conceit that souls who have once advanced to the human plane can be degraded again to the animal condition. He could find surely in the debased and distorted forms of human embodiment, of which the world affords such variety of specimens, all the scope needed for every form of discipline or of trial needed in the case of souls that must be remanded down the scale.

We do not believe that God's work in training human souls into His own image requires such backward steps as he imagines. This writer, with all his rare spiritual insight, needs yet to grasp the full truth concerning the solidarity of the human race, as embracing in its one organism the dead with the living who take up life's battles where the dead laid them down, and in whom the dead again gain foothold in life, either through re-incarnation, or by identification with them in their struggles on to victory. He evidently perceives the truth there is in re-incarnation, but fails to see that this very principle requires that there be found in the heights and depths of humanity, as now constituted, all that is necessary for the judgment, the discipline, and ultimate perfection of all the members of the one body of the race.

In the extract that follows, however, there is nothing to criticise.

> The real man is the divine ideal of him; the man God had in view when He began to send him forth out of thought into thinking; the man He is now working to perfect by casting out what is not he, and developing what is he. But in God's real men—that is, His ideal men—the diversity is infinite; He does not repeat His creations; every one of His children differs from every other, and in every one the diversity is lovable. God gives in His children an analysis of Himself, an analysis that will never be exhausted. It is the original God-idea of the individual man that will at length be given, without spot or blemish, into the arms of love.

THE QUEST of truth, of freedom, and of happiness is the quest of God; and however far away from Him in spirit any seeker of truth may be, let him but have his face in

the right direction, he is on the path that leads to God; for the pursuit of knowledge is the quest of unity and permanence; of the One who gives life, order, and meaning to all things; of the permanent source amid the everlasting flux of the visible world.—*John Wilson.*

"The love of God is the truest key of knowledge; according to the aphorism of a great man:—*The love of God is the light of the soul.* It brightens the understanding as well as warms the affections; clears the head as well as enlarges the heart; it gives to the soul an open and clear view of the greatest and noblest truth, both in nature and religion. It is the best instructor in theory, and the best guide and director in practice; the best expositor of Scripture; the best resolver of doubts; the best distinguisher of the will of God; the best decider of cases of conscience, and the best moderator and composer of disputes in cases of religion."—*Selected.*

The Theory of Expiation.—The ecclesiastical theory of expiation, so far from interpreting the apostles' doctrine aright, amounts to its formal contradiction. The idea of an external *satisfaction*, given to God in order to wrest the pardon of sinners from Him, is foreign to all the epistles. Paul nowhere says that God needed to be appeased. He starts from the contrary point of view. The pardon of sin is ever the spontaneous act of God's love. It is His sovereign and absolute grace which took and still maintains the initiative in the work of redemption. The sacrifice of Christ, so far from being the cause of this love, is its effect. It was not accomplished outside the sphere of

grace—outside, as one might say, of God Himself—in order to influence the Divine will; but *God Himself was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself by Him* (II Cor. v, 19).

As Paul does not admit the traditional dualism in God between love and righteousness, so neither does he make any distinction between the forgiveness of sin and the destruction of sin itself. The idea of an external expiation was not enough for him. The standard passages upon which it has been founded (Rom. iii, 25; Gal. iii, 13) are far from giving us his whole teaching on the subject; nor have they in the Pauline theory the capital importance attributed to them by scholastic theology. If we have any regard for the logical unity of the Pauline doctrine, we must expound these texts in harmony with Romans vi, 1–11; viii, 3, and II Corinthians v, 21. Only by the aid of these latter passages can we gain an adequate view of the apostle's entire doctrine of Redemption. Now, these texts make the practical effect of the death of Jesus to consist not in the satisfaction which it rendered to God, but in the destruction of sin that it accomplished.

—*Professor A. Sabatier.*

Corporate Responsibility is very plainly taught in the record of our Lord's final words to the Jewish people as given in Matthew xxiii, 30–39. He denounces them as by their own confession "the children of them which killed the prophets" and who, in their treatment of Him and His disciples, were about to "fill up the measure" of their fathers, and upon whom should be visited "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of

righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias," whom they slew between the temple and the altar. The vice of religious bigotry, and hypocrisy, and cruel rage against the men sent to denounce their sins and warn them against impending judgments, was so in the blood that He styles them "serpents, a brood of vipers," fit only for the damnation of hell. And all this accumulated guilt and weight of doom was to "come upon this generation."

Surely there is some radical principle of identity between fathers and children here. No arbitrary law of representative relations suffices to account for this transfer of responsibility and this cumulation of wrath. The former generations of evil-doers are regarded as one in being and destiny with their children, in whom all their vices were reproduced and summed up. This supposes that something more than a conventional or forensic relation subsists between them. Fathers and children were corporate partakers of one common life—a human organism in which they were members one of another.

And so in the coming salvation which should hereafter find Jerusalem in her desolation. Hereafter her people should look upon Him whom they had pierced, and say "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Is there such inequity in the judgments of God that we can suppose there could be this forward transfer of guilt and no corresponding reflex transfer of blessing? If the children were to suffer for the sins of the fathers, the fathers would hereafter also be blessed in the repentance and restoration of the children. As St. Paul puts it in the eleventh of Romans, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer,

and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins."

CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS are stamped with the infirmities no less than with the nobleness of the men that made them. They are their best thoughts about Christian truth, as they saw it in their time; intrinsically they are nothing more! And any claim of infallibility for them is the worst kind of Popery, that Popery which degrades the Christian reason, while it fails to nourish the Christian imagination.—*Principal Tulloch.*

IT IS EASY to be traditional, dogmatic, when you do not require to think.—*Tulloch.*

"TOGETHER."—In Romans viii, 22, we are told that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain *together* until now. We are apt to overlook the force of the word "together" in this passage. The word "creature," which occurs repeatedly in this connection, may refer either to the human race, or to the whole natural system of which it forms a part. In either case we are taught that there is an organic connection between all its parts, so that the pain of one is the pain of all, and the redemption, of which the firstfruits portion are now the partakers, will be the joy and deliverance of all. Our theology has gone to great excess in the direction of individualism. Such passages as this show us how the individual is bound up in the race to which he belongs; how he must take his part in the suffering of the whole until the whole is delivered.

In the light of the truth here taught, our teaching with regard to the solidarity of the race, and the partner-

ship in being and in destiny preserved between the living and the dead does not seem so strange.

In proposing re-incarnation as a probable solution of the problem of the resurrection of the unjust, our anxiety is not for this doctrine itself, but for the principle that lies behind it and which is essential to a right understanding of Scripture. This principle is that the generations of the living are so connected with the generations of the dead, that they take up their uncompleted probation, and both share in the results achieved. The doctrine of re-incarnation may not be a complete expression of this principle, it may only point that way. It certainly needs to be thoroughly revised, as it has come down to us from the past, in the light of the new hopes for the race brought in by the gospel. Especially it must be recast in a way that makes room for the Christian faith and hope that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world and the Emancipator of the race from the grinding operation of the law of recovery to life as the heathen conceived it. For, while it must remain eternally true that they who sow to the flesh must reap corruption, Jesus Christ saves men from the yoke of this law by lifting them into the higher region of the spirit, where they may sow to the spirit and reap the life everlasting, which is entire deliverance from the flesh and its bondage.

It is, indeed, no duty for a man to despise or reject his beliefs, simply because they are inherited; but it is his duty to see that they are held as matters of deliberate, unbiased, personal conviction. It is no hopeful sign of the individual or the nation that lightly throws off inherited

convictions; yet there is something more sacred and momentous still to each man than ancestral claims upon his heart and memory, even the claims of God and truth upon his conscience.—*John Wilson* in *Ænigma Vitæ.*

NOTES ON CURRENT TOPICS.

The Eschatology of the Symbols.—The article of Professor E. D. Morris, D. D., in the last number of the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, makes clear—what no one who understands the common use of language could have doubted—that the Westminster Standards do not give the least standing-room anywhere for the doctrine of a *post-mortem* probation. On the contrary, they teach without qualification or reserve, as he affirms, that the unrighteous are to be everlastingly separated from the presence of God, and to be judicially punished by Him with unspeakable tortures of body and mind in hell-fire, without intermission or cessation, to endless ages.

We are glad to see this matter clearly and authoritatively set forth, so that all men may understand precisely what Presbyterian ministers are bound to believe and to teach on this subject, and that their own consciences may be stimulated to inquire whether the protest made in the hearts of many of them against this awful idea of God and of human destiny is not just, and whether it is right and honest for them to go on affirming this doctrine before God and men.

For whatever relief has been attempted by the Revision movement in other directions, this sore spot, which is the real seat of their trouble, has been carefully avoided.

While Dr. Morris is right in holding his brethren straight to the line of this severe doctrine, he is altogether wrong in his bold assumption that these awful statements of the Confession are drawn directly from the words of our Lord Himself. He quotes, for example, His words, "Where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." But Dr. Morris knows that these words, as they first occur in Scripture (Is. lxvi, 24), relate to the consumption of dead carcases, and he ought to know that there is not the

least warrant for the supposition that our Saviour uses them to describe the unending torment of immortal men. He ought to know, for the truth has been set before him, that the resurrection-hope, as outlined in the Old Testament, and as confirmed in the gospel of the New, furnishes an altogether different standpoint from which to estimate the words of Jesus upon this whole subject, and that the Apostles so viewed them ; for never once do they address men from the standpoint of the Westminster teaching, that unjust men stand on the edge of such awful doom to ceaseless torments in an endless hell. Their doctrine is, "Whose end is destruction." And their declaration is that even out of this destruction unjust men are to be raised from the dead. They cannot come forth in the personalities which were consigned to destruction, because unjust, but for other forms of judgment in the flesh, so that the image of God, in which they were ideally created may be finally realized in them. The doctrine which Jesus taught, that God is the Father of men, forbids the idea that these evil personalities, in which this divine sonship fails to be realized, are the whole of man, and that in their destruction in death and hell the *real* man is destroyed. The provision of resurrection in Christ is God's affirmation of His right to reclaim this, His own child, and to re-invest him with another personality suited to his further training and correction. It is because men have confounded the eternal destruction of this old and carnal man, which refuses to be spiritualized, with the destruction of the man himself, that they have fallen into such gross mistakes as are embodied in the Westminster symbols. There is a divine self in every man, beneath this external self, which cannot be destroyed because it cannot sin, and because it is begotten of God. The resurrection of the saint is the complete personalization of this divine nature in perfect, heavenly manhood. The resurrection of the unjust, while it is their failure to reach this goal of manhood, and their condemnation to the hazard and suffering of another trial in the flesh, is yet a merciful provision for their beginning once more to tread the path which leads to the goal.

Post-mortem probation, therefore, is either true or not true, according to the point from which it is viewed. As respects the

human personality which has failed to become a fit temple for God, it is not true. As respects the immortal spirit which dwelt in that personality, it is true that it must go on with its effort to mold for itself in human nature a personal expression of God which death and hell can never destroy.

Dr. Colfelt's Resignation.—The Presbyterian community in this city has been profoundly stirred by the resignation of one of its ablest preachers and the pastor of what is perhaps its foremost church in Philadelphia. Dr. Colfelt was greatly admired and beloved by his congregation, and when such a man leaves such a place under the stress of strong convictions of duty, there must be something wrong in the system that compels the change. Dr. Colfelt seems to have yielded to the behests of the system without first, as it seems to us, doing his full duty toward it. When a few years ago the same necessity was forced upon us, we felt bound, before taking the step, to discharge what we believe to be a solemn duty put upon every minister by his consecration vows—to seek to promote the purity of the Church by pointing out the error into which she has been betrayed and to strive for its removal. In the Presbytery and through this publication we labored to this end, and only withdrew after submitting the matter to the Presbytery and asking its judgment in the case.

Dr. Colfelt has been an earnest advocate of Revision, and he very likely has satisfied his conscience in this matter by his efforts in that direction. We wish, however, that in addition he had frankly stated the points at which he believed the Church to be at variance with the truth, and had sought to recover her where she has gone astray. It is impossible to see how anything wrong in doctrine in the Church can ever be set right, except by the candid and earnest efforts of her ordained servants, whose loyalty to her highest good will prompt them to lay down even their ecclesiastical lives in the service of their brethren.

The only point, therefore, of criticism which we would make upon Dr. Colfelt's admirable letter—which is given below—is that it assumes that a man's love and loyalty for his Church can be shown in no other way than by strict conformity to its tenets,

whereas he may sometimes give the very highest proof of loyal and devoted service in opposing them.

"PHILADELPHIA, September 19th, 1892.

"*To the Session, Board of Trustees, and Congregation of Oxford Church:*

"Having experienced a very considerable change in theological belief, I deem it no longer compatible with my ordination vows and my conscience to continue as your minister, sincerity being above all things vital to the preacher. I can conceive of nothing baser than for one to believe one system of truth in his heart and expound another with his lips.

"To be consciously at variance with the tenets of one's Church, and use one's position not to indoctrinate and fortify but to undermine and destroy the congregation's belief in those tenets, is a part too disingenuous for a manly minister to play. Better a thousand times sacrifice the emoluments of the most popular ministry, face poverty, rend asunder the most tender ties, pluck out one's eye, than violate in the most sacred office on earth the integrity of one's conscience.

"Convinced, therefore, that I cannot sincerely preach the Presbyterian dogmas from your pulpit, and with an eye single to the peace and prosperity of Oxford Church, I herewith tender my resignation as your Pastor, and retire henceforth from the Presbyterian ministry.

"Believe me that this step has not been taken without the utmost deliberation and without much struggling and suffering.

"For all the patience and loving kindness which I have received universally at your hands I am profoundly grateful. Invoking the choicest blessings of Almighty favor on the entire Church, each office bearer, every household, and especially on the young people, and begging of you but one final kindness, namely, that you will spare me the formal farewell,

"I am yours affectionately,

"LAWRENCE M. COLFELT."

ANOTHER INSTANCE.—A paper sent to us from Denver gives an account of the withdrawal from the Presbyterian pulpit of the Rev. Walter G. Rudolph, pastor of the Westminster Church of that city, on the ground of his rejection of the doctrine of endless future punishment. He believes and has preached that the wicked will be eternally destroyed.

If all the Presbyterian ministers who secretly believe in the final extinction of the wicked were to openly express their belief there would be many more enforced vacancies. This brother had the courage of his convictions, and the Presbytery invited him to resign.

We have personal knowledge that this so-called heretical opinion is indulged by some men who are among the most highly esteemed in that communion.

We observe, by the way, that the report in the *Presbyterian* of this case states that Mr. Rudolph "disbelieves, now, in the doctrine of future punishment." Religious papers, of all others, should speak the truth, and especially when the character and reputation of a minister of the Gospel are involved. In the paper sent to us from Denver, a full report is given of Mr. Rudolph's statement before the Presbytery and to the Church, in which he explicitly declares that he does believe in the future punishment of the wicked, and that it eventuates not in their endless torment but in their eternal destruction.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

It seems fitting that in this closing number we should give extracts from some of many letters received, testifying to the usefulness of this magazine, and regretting its discontinuance.

From a Presbyterian minister in Ohio:

DEAR BROTHER BAKER:—The announcement that you had decided that the publication of WORDS OF RECONCILIATION must be discontinued made me sad. Yet, if you are satisfied that it is the Lord's will, we must acquiesce. If I were able, how glad I should be to share the burden of its continuance and wider dissemination. But I do not believe your labor and sacrifice have been in vain, or that your testimony will cease to bear fruit. The Lord guide you to and bless you in whatever work He has for you.

From a Congregationalist minister in Massachusetts:

While I regret that you should abandon the publication, I admit the cogency of your reasons for it, nor do I at all wonder at your

course. The eight volumes together constitute a library I hold to be one of the most valuable contributions to the Literature of Eschatology now extant.

I am truly grieved that it should not go on.

From a lady in Washington, D. C.:

I desire to thank you most warmly for the light you have thrown upon the doctrine of the Resurrection. The work you have done in this direction is enough for a lifetime, if you did no other.

A lady who has been a generous supporter of this work writes from Newport, R. I.:

I am just on the eve of leaving for Europe, but I cannot resist writing to tell you how grieved I am with your decision to discontinue the magazine. I shall sadly feel the want of it.

Its mission to lift off the yoke which our fathers had bequeathed us, to hold up the joyous hope of a redemptive resurrection, as well as to enlighten and instruct in the wise and all-merciful purpose of God, has certainly been faithfully fulfilled, and I feel sure the light of your teachings has come to many a burdened heart that you know not of. I most earnestly thank you for the enlightenment and profit I have received through your writings.

A Boston subscriber writes:

We were not surprised at your announcement of discontinuance, as you had before prepared us for it as a possibility. We have been deeply interested and much profited by its teaching.

Before our announcement we had received the following from a Presbyterian pastor in Kansas:

I write to renew my subscription to WORDS OF RECONCILIATION and to express my thankfulness, even at this late date, that your magazine still lives. Enclosed find post-office money order for $1.00, which should have been sent much sooner, but I have had to remove my family twice during the year, and while my income has been small, expenses have been great.

But you must not think that I am losing interest either in yourself or the magazine. It grows richer with every number, and you are certainly filling a unique and much-needed place in the theological world. In my humble opinion, your little magazine is shedding purer light upon the great problem of human life and

destiny than any other publication now extant. Others are good, indeed, but yours is better. It is absolutely loyal to Holy Scripture. It is never offensively dogmatic. Then there is a *growth* of thought in it, a spirit about it, a fairness of statement, and a logic of argument pervading it that must commend themselves to every thoughtful mind. They do so commend themselves. Whatever may be said of the "*how*" and "*where*" of these great questions, your central positions are certainly invulnerable—the essentially redemptive character of Resurrection, the solidarity of the race, of which Jesus the Christ is the living head. The fact that but two orders of manhood are mentioned in the Scriptures, the *earthly* and the *heavenly*, the salvation of men through a "*chosen seed*," and the great purpose of God to finally produce *on this earth* a redeemed and immortal race of men certainly are distinct lines of truth that may be followed with safety.

May the Lord direct and bless you in everything.

One of the most spiritually minded of our readers wrote from Chicago of the October number:

I write to let you know how well I like the now familiar WORDS OF RECONCILIATION. The current number I enjoyed so much that I cannot refrain from telling you how much your writings benefit me. The article, "The Godward Side of the Atonement," is one of the best I have ever read on that great and deep subject. I believe it gives the Scriptural view of that doctrine, and those Christians who view it in the light in which it is there set forth cannot help realizing the solemnity and necessity of literally following Christ, of having an experimental knowledge of God, which is eternal life. The article you wrote last spring on the same doctrine was also full of grand and practical teaching. Such beautiful, practical interpretations of Scripture as are set forth in WORDS OF RECONCILIATION certainly do not tend to foster a parasitic faith as does much of the current popular religious teaching of the day.

That God may bless you, my dear brother, and guide you in your good work is my sincere prayer.

From a lady in Europe:

I cannot sufficiently thank you for the benefit the WORDS OF RECONCILIATION have been to me. Your views on the Resurrection, the hopes afforded us for the repair of the mistakes of this life, and for the help of those who have gone before by our lives here have been of the greatest interest to me. It is a pleasing

thought that when a future life opens to me, it may come within the scope of Divine mercy that I may yet be of service to some of my own loved ones who are still young, and with life's temptations before them.

An Episcopal clergyman writes from Northern New York:

I am extremely sorry at the discontinuance of your valuable magazine, which I have always read with great interest.

An elder writes from Central New York:

I enjoy and profit by the magazine more and more every succeeding year. I believe these WORDS OF RECONCILIATION are doing good service to the Church universal, and to the Presbyterian Church, to which I belong, in particular.

An aged lady in Pittsburgh who has been a generous friend of the work says:

I received the November number, and was really sorry you are going to stop its publication, as I feel convinced it was on the line of truth. There was much in it that I could not take hold of, yet I felt if I could see these things as you do, it would enable me to understand many portions of God's Word that now seem dark to me. The Lord is daily giving me more light, and may in His own good time open my understanding to these advanced truths. I therefore wish you to send me all your bound volumes, some of which I have, but I want all you have written.

The sympathy of the Rev. Andrew Jukes, of Woolwich, England, with this work has frequently appeared on these pages. We have space left for only a part of a letter just received from him:

The fact that any testimony for God and for His truth has not succeeded in winning the confidence and support of the professing Church is no proof that it has been a mistake. All the true prophets perished in Jerusalem, and even the Lord of prophets was condemned as a deceiver by God's people, to whom He had been sent with the words of life and light. Do not think, therefore, that your testimony has been in vain. Often the temporary cessation of a testimony speaks louder than all the words which man can utter. Truth also has a way of rising again with greater power after it has been rejected and crucified and slain. Be of good cheer.